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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 002393

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA DAS FISK, WHA/CCA, AND WHA/CEN
STATE FOR PRM, PRM/ENA, PRM/ECA, AND PRM/PRP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/26/2014

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [MARR](#) [CU](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: DETAILS OF RESETTLEMENT OF PROTECTED CUBAN
MIGRANTS FROM GUANTANAMO TO HONDURAS STILL TBD

REF: A. STATE 228229

- [1](#)B. MANDOJANA/PALMER E-MAIL 10/21/04
- [1](#)C. GEHRING/OLSEN E-MAILS/TELCONS/FAXES 10/15/04 AND
10/20-21/04
- [1](#)D. TEGUCIGALPA 2297
- [1](#)E. POPE/OLSEN E-MAILS/TELCONS/FAXES 10/8/04 AND
10/12/04
- [1](#)F. STATE 216668
- [1](#)G. TEGUCIGALPA 1524
- [1](#)H. STATE 139422

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Roger Pierce;
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Post continues to work closely with the Honduran Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the proposed resettlement of 20 protected Cuban migrants in Guantanamo to Honduras. While the GOH has repeatedly said yes to the resettlement in general, the details of the resettlement, including exact numbers and immigration status/work authorization upon arrival in Honduras, remain to be determined. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Acting PolCouns on October 20 raised the USG's concerns on immigration status/work authorization (ref C) with MFA DG for Foreign Policy AMB Mario Fortin and talked to International Organization for Migration (IOM) Representative Norberto Giron about the possible acceptance by Honduras of up to 20 GTMO Cubans. Giron said that if the GOH accepted GTMO Cubans, IOM could help facilitate the immigration details as they had done with a previous group of GTMO Cubans that came to Honduras in 2001. Acting PolCouns underlined to Fortin USG concerns about the immigration status the GTMO Cubans would be granted (especially U.S. concern over "economic refugee" vs. refugee/permanent residency status, and the importance of the GTMO Cubans having authorization to work). Acting PolCouns suggested that the arrangement that was used for the 2001 group of GTMO Cubans be used again, since IOM had said it had been without problems and done with a low profile. Fortin said he would relay these points to the FM.

[1](#)3. (C) DCM and Acting PolCouns met October 22 with Foreign Minister Leonidas Rosa Bautista to discuss several issues, including the GTMO Cubans. DCM noted that the Embassy understood that during their October 22 meeting in Washington the Secretary had thanked Honduran President Ricardo Maduro for agreeing to take Cuban migrants from GTMO, and that Maduro had said he was happy to do so (ref B). The FM said that he was awaiting Maduro's return to Honduras October 23 before moving ahead on the details of resettling the GTMO Cubans. Acting PolCouns underlined to the FM USG concerns about the immigration status the GTMO Cubans would be granted, noting that economic refugee status without work authorization was problematic, and suggesting that refugee/permanent residency status with work authorization would be far preferable (refs A and C).

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: EmbOffs will continue to work with the FM and other MFA officials for clarification of the details on the proposed resettlement, including the exact number the GOH will accept and what immigration status/work authorization will be granted upon arrival in Honduras. Post is guardedly optimistic that all outstanding issues will be resolved favorably. End comment.
Palmer